



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

www.state.gov

August 4, 2020

George G. Horiates, Esq
AHEPA President
1909 Q St NW
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Mr. Horiates:

Thank you for your letter to Secretary Pompeo, dated July 22, 2020. The Secretary asked me to respond on his behalf.

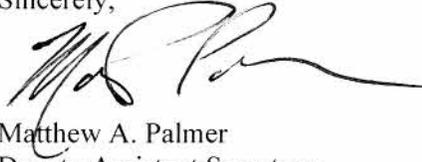
As we have said publicly, the United States is deeply concerned by Turkey's announced intention to survey for natural resources in areas of the Eastern Mediterranean over which Greece asserts jurisdiction. We continue to urge Turkish authorities to halt these activities and to avoid steps that raise tensions in the region. We fully agree that a conflict between two NATO Allies must be avoided. In our view, resource development in the Eastern Mediterranean should promote cooperation and provide a foundation for durable energy security and economic prosperity throughout the region.

As you correctly noted, the United States' view is that under international law as reflected in the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention, islands generally generate an EEZ and continental shelf to the same extent as any other land territory. The United States generally does not take a position on other states' maritime boundary disputes, which is the term used to describe a situation in which the maritime claims of two or more states overlap. However, we consider Turkey's actions in the Eastern Mediterranean, including its July 21 notification of survey activity in the Eastern Mediterranean, unhelpful and provocative and we have made that clear in both public and private. As a matter of longstanding policy, we encourage states to resolve their disputes peacefully in accordance with international law.

The Administration continues to object strenuously to Turkey's S-400 purchase. Our suspension and pending removal of Turkey from the F-35 program in response to the S-400 acquisition signals the seriousness of the Administration's approach to this issue and our willingness to impose consequences. We are deeply concerned with reports that Turkey is continuing its efforts to operationalize the S-400, and we have stressed that this issue remains a major obstacle in the bilateral relationship and at NATO. We are confident that President Erdogan and his senior officials understand our position.

Thank you for the important role the Order of AHEPA plays in strengthening U.S.-Greece bilateral relations, which are at a generational high. From our continued close cooperation with Athens on energy, highlighted by U.S. Development Finance Corporation President Adam Boehler's commitment to advancing our energy partnership with Greece, to the recent arrival of the 101st Airborne Combat Aviation Brigade at the Port of Alexandroupoli to begin a training deployment in Europe, we have many successes to celebrate in U.S.-Greece relations. As Secretary Pompeo has noted, Greece is a pillar of stability in the Eastern Mediterranean, and we will continue our efforts to further strengthen this critical relationship.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Palmer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Matthew A. Palmer
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs